

REMARKS

Entry of this Amendment in supplement to the Amendment filed on July 6, 2004 is respectfully requested.

By the present Amendment, a minor correction has been made in claim 5 and new claims 23-32 have been added to further define the present invention. Also, Figs. 5-7 have been amended to illustrate marked positions for 12A-12C and 14A-14C as described in the specification (beginning, for example, on page 14).

Allowance of the newly submitted claims 23-32 is respectfully requested. By virtue of these claims, as well as previously submitted independent claim 21 and its dependent claims, a method of processing a semiconductor device is provided which includes steps of calculating without disregarding matching error (e.g., 16A-16C) at overlay mark positions between exposure distortions (e.g., 12A-12C or 14A-14C) of first and second layer overlay mark positions to indicate disparity between first and second exposure tools and/or first and second masks by a separating matching error (15A-15C) in circuit pattern areas between exposure distortions (e.g., 11A-11C or 13A-13C) of first and second layer circuit patterns which are smaller than an exposure field. In conjunction with this, a first exposure condition correction value (such as 18) based on the overlay measurement result, which is a result of actual exposure by the second exposure tool by positioning with reference to overlay marks. Subsequently, the calculated first exposure condition correction value (e.g., 18) is modified by using the calculated matching error (e.g., 16A-16C) at overlay mark position to obtain a second exposure condition correction value (e.g., 19A-19C) (nearing the exposure by using the second exposure tool) as shown, for example, in Fig. 6 or 7.


The present independent claims 21, 23 and 27 clearly set forth the above-noted distinctions over the cited prior art, including the cited primary references to Ueno and Ishibashi. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of these independent claims 21, 23 and 27, together with their dependent claims, is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner believes that there are any other points which may be clarified or otherwise disposed of either by telephone discussion or by personal interview, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Docket No. 520.41109X00), and please credit any excess fees to such Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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